



IOWA PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

Childhood Blood Lead Testing Compliance

In 2008, a “Mandatory Blood Lead Testing Bill” was passed into Iowa law, which required children be tested for lead at least once before entering kindergarten. The intent of this law was to protect Iowa children from the adverse effects of lead on brain and nervous system development; and to reduce the number of children with lead related developmental deficits and learning disorders.

What was the Problem/Situation?

The law also mandated the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) work together to match kindergarten enrollment registers and blood lead testing records to identify children that had not been screened for lead poisoning. To fulfill this mandate, the IDPH and IDOE collaborated to encourage all public schools to submit an enrollment register of kindergarten students to IDPH within the first 60 days of each new school year.

How was Iowa Public Health Tracking Involved?

The IDPH Lead Prevention Program did not have the capacity to conduct the mandated matching of school enrollment records with the state lead testing database and return the results to the schools. The Iowa Tracking program’s assistance was requested to review the format of the enrollment data received and to assist in performing the school match.

The Iowa Tracking program provided guidance on formatting of enrollment data and completed the match to lead testing records. The matched files and formatted reports were provided to the Lead Prevention program for distribution to the schools. This allowed IDPH to fulfill the mandated matching for the first time since the law was enacted.

What Action was Taken to Solve the Problem/Situation?

Using the reports provided, school districts can identify children who have not received a lead test, and can work with parents and local public health officials to ensure a lead test is conducted.

The initial matching process identified that only 72% of the children reported on the enrollment registers had received a blood lead test. The matching process also identified school districts with low lead testing percentages that can be targeted for interventions to increase compliance.

